The Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) is a regional coalition of national and regional CSOs in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development.

The Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF) is a legal, non-stock, non-profit, non-government organization advocating programs and projects that will alleviate poverty and promote social empowerment. XSF serves as a conduit of funds to support development projects, innovative programs, fora, and dialogues.

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is an alliance of international partners contributing to poverty alleviation through increased access to land and tenure security for all. GLTN develops, disseminates and implements pro-poor, gender-responsive land tools that contribute to land reform, good land governance, inclusive land administration, sustainable land management, and functional land sector coordination.

The United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) is working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is the primary State development body of Germany. BMZ’s governing principle is the protection of human rights, which includes the right to live in peace and freedom, and to help address the poverty issues in the world.

For more information about the project:

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For more information about the SALaR program, please visit
https://gltn.net/programmes/secure-access-to-land-and-resources/
WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

In the Philippines, while a number of land laws are being implemented, several gaps need to be addressed to improve the situation of their intended beneficiaries — the tens of millions of rural smallholders who continue to live in poverty. It is in this context that the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGCOR) and the Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF) is implementing the project entitled *Enhancing Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Northern Mindanao, Philippines.*

The project issues a document that certifies a person or family holding occupancy or tenure rights over a piece of land including the house structure, garden, and farm area. The document is developed with the use of the land tool called Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM). The issued certificates of customary land occupancy are under the names of both the husband and the wife within a household, countering the more common practice of issuing official titles in the name of the male household head.

Through this initiative, members of indigenous communities, especially the youth, are also gaining skills in the STDM, being at the frontline in conducting participatory enumeration exercises, GIS mapping, encoding and generating the certificates from the data collected. Moreover, community members are also able to take part in a training course on enhancing their knowledge and skills on landscape governance, particularly on local development planning, land conflicts, and the roles of women and youth.

The certificates of customary land occupancy will be recognized by traditional leaders and barangay officials. The certificate provided is not a legal document and cannot be used to sell or lease a piece of land being occupied. However, this document may be used to recognize the individuals or families occupying parcels of land that is respected by the community and its leaders.

This project is part of the Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALAR) program of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) as facilitated by UN-Habitat. This initiative is being supported by GLTN and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The project aims to award at least 1,200 certificates of customary land occupancy.

Provide training courses to select individuals to become the project enumerators.

Strengthen the harmonious relationship of the community by recognizing the boundaries of every land or area being occupied.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Consultation with and endorsement by the local government unit (e.g., barangay LGU, municipal LGU) and Indigenous Peoples Organization (IPO);

Partnership-building through signing the Memorandum of Understanding;

Selection of individuals to become enumerators based on the criteria set by XSF;

Conduct of training courses for enumerators;

Conduct of participatory enumeration, community mapping, and interviews;

Encoding of collected data in the STDM software;

Conduct of validation activity to ensure accurate data;

Rectification of data in the STDM before finalization; and,

Awarding of certificates of customary land occupancy.

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1 The Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) is a pro-poor, gender responsive, and participatory land information system which reflects person-to-land relationships along the land rights continuum. It was developed by GLTN to bridge the gap between formally registered land and land that is not registered.